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The ABC of minor tactics

Alfred Benwell Letts

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THE

A B C OF MINOR TACTICS:

COLLECTED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES

FOR THE USE OF OFFICERS OF THE REGULAR AND AUXILIARY FORCES READING FOR PROMOTION, AND ALSO FOR THOSE STUDYING FOR THE MILITARY (MILITIA) COMPETITIVE AND THE T. EXAMINATIONS.

BY

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LONDON:

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1885.

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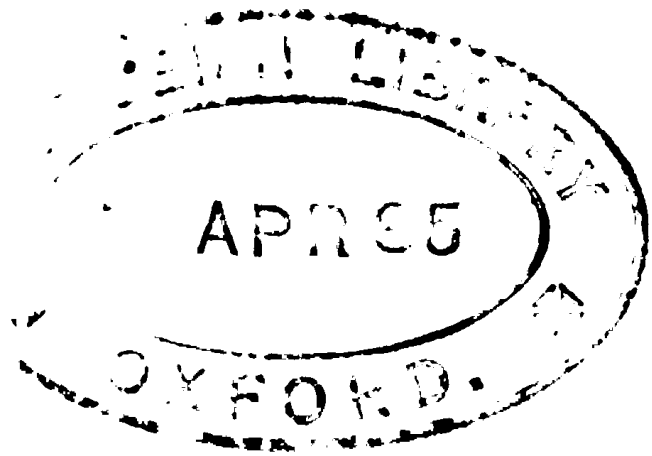

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PREFACE.

THIS book has been chiefly compiled for the use of those who are unable to consult the more expensive military dictionaries now in use; as the writer has found from experience that when commencing the study of Minor Tactics the student is frequently at a loss to understand the military meanings of many of the words used. It is hoped that by the aid of this book such difficulty will be avoided, and that both teacher and pupil will by its assistance find comparative ease in their labours.

A. B. L.

WIDEY COTTAGE,
PLYMOUTH.

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THE A B C OF MINOR TACTICS.

A.

ABATIS.—An obstacle used in the defence of woods, villages, defiles, &c. Usually made of large trees which have been cut down. The stems are firmly fastened to the ground with the larger branches sharpened to a point and turned outwards. They are of little use if much exposed to artillery, or when fixed within musketry range.

ACCOUTREMENTS.—The belts, pouches, slings, &c., used by the British soldier.

ACTION.—A battle. Artillery, cavalry, and infantry come into action when they open fire, or become exposed to the fire of the enemy. The action of infantry is fire-action and shock-action; of cavalry, shock-action and dismounted fire-action; of artillery, fire-action alone.

ADMINISTRATION.—Military administration is the art of raising troops and supplying them with food, clothing, ammunition, pay, &c.

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ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT.—A company of infantry, or any body of troops conveniently formed for the purposes of payment, discipline, &c.

ADVANCED GUARDS.—Detachments thrown out in advance of an army or other force on the march, to prevent surprise and gain information. The composition depends on various circumstances, and the strength may be from $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the army. *See* Clery, p. 84.

ADVANCED POSTS.—Fortified villages, &c., in advance of the main line of battle. Small advanced posts, composed of double sentries with their reliefs close at hand, are used by outposts at night to replace the cordon system which has been used by day.

ALARM.—A bugle-sound to warn infantry to look out for cavalry; or any warning against danger, by gun-fire or other means. Alarm posts are detailed by all picquets, usually in rear of the fires where sentries are to assemble if driven in by the enemy.

ALERT.—A bugle-sound to put soldiers on their guard. An outpost is said to have been kept on the alert when it has been attacked or constantly threatened by the enemy.

ALIGNMENT.—An imaginary straight line, lying between two points, upon which troops are to form or march.

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ALTERNATIVE.—Offering a choice of two things.

AMBULANCE.—A corps of men formed to attend on the sick and wounded. All medical equipment with an army on service.

AMMUNITION.—Includes all powder, projectiles, fuses, &c., used by an army. Infantry carry 70 rounds per man; cavalry armed with carbines, 20 rounds per man; the number of rounds carried by artillery varies according to the size of the gun, but 150 rounds is the greatest amount.

ANGLE.—The meeting of two lines in a point. There are various sorts of angles spoken of in gunnery and fortification too numerous to name here.

ANNIHILATION.—The act of totally destroying the form under which a thing existed, so that it no longer answers to its description.

APEX.—The highest point, or summit of a mountain or hill.

APPUI.—The point of formation. A fixed point of support in rear or on the flank of an army.

AREA.—The superficial contents of any figure. The surface included within any given lines, as the area of a square or triangle.

ARMY.—A collection or body of men, of all branches of the service, armed for war. Modern armies consist of artillery, cavalry, engineers,

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infantry, commissariat, medical, veterinary, chaplains, &c. Armies are usually subdivided into army corps, divisions, and brigades.

ARTIFICERS.—Skilled workmen. As a military term this is usually applied to the Royal Engineers.

ARTILLERY.—Has been described as being worse than useless off the field of battle, but invaluable on it. The effect of artillery is more moral than real, it kills but few, but strikes terror into the hearts of all. It is very expensive to equip and maintain, and takes longer to train than any other arm; it is bulky, complicated, and liable to casualties, cannot easily change position, and is powerless when in motion, consequently it must always have an escort of either cavalry or infantry. There are four classes of batteries now in use—

1. Horse Artillery Batteries.
2. Field Artillery Batteries.
3. Mountain Batteries.
4. Position Batteries.

Mountain batteries have neither limbers nor waggons, and Horse Artillery Batteries always manœuvre without their waggons. *See* BATTERY.

ART OF WAR.—The art of war enables a mass of men to be so organised and disciplined that their efforts may be directed towards the same object. It transforms a confused multitude of men into a trained and obedient body of troops.

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Lastly, it allows an entire army to be moved on the field of battle in accordance with one will and one idea, that of the general officer commanding.

ATTACK.—An assault upon an enemy to drive him from his position. *The Attack* is a term used in the "Field Exercise" to denote the extended formation in which a body of troops is brought up to a point, sufficiently near the position of the enemy, whence the most severe fire can be poured in and the final assault made.

ATTAINMENTS.—Knowledge gained by effort.

B.

BARRICADE.—To fortify with any slight work capable of retarding the approach of an enemy, or to weaken any sudden attack. Barricades are usually made in two parts, one overlapping the other, so as to allow free ingress and egress to the defenders. They are generally used to connect the outer line of defences of a village, and to block the roads through woods, defiles, &c.

BASE OF OPERATIONS.—The original line on which an offensive army forms. It must always be kept open to afford supplies to the army, and safety and succour in case of retreat. This base may be changed from time to time during the campaign as the general officer commanding may find necessary.

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BASE COMPANY OR BATTALION.—The company or battalion by which a formation is regulated.

BASE POINTS.—The points given by markers as a base for forming line in prolongation of that base.

BASIS.—The groundwork or first principle. The foundation of anything.

BATTALION.—A body of infantry of the maximum strength to be efficiently handled and commanded in action by one officer. It is usually considered the tactical unit of infantry, and may be composed of from four to ten companies. In war time a British battalion of eight companies is composed of 31 officers, 10 staff-sergeants, 8 colour-sergeants, 32 sergeants, 16 drummers, and 1000 rank and file.

BATTERY.—This is the tactical unit of artillery. Field and horse artillery batteries consist of six guns and waggons; a mountain battery, or a battery of position, of four guns. *See* ARTILLERY.

BATTLE.—An action in which two contending armies are engaged; this is the issue to which all military operations tend, and the secret of success consists in acting with superior force at decisive points.

BAYONET.—A triangular-shaped sword or dagger, which when fitted on to the muzzle of a rifle becomes a most formidable weapon both in attack and defence.

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BIVOUAC.—An army or body of troops is said to bivouac when it rests at night in the open air without covering. It is sometimes of great advantage, as it renders it difficult for the enemy to discover the strength of the attacking force, there being no tents by which their numbers can be judged.

BOMBARDIER.—The name given to non-commissioned officers of the lowest rank in the Royal Artillery.

BREACH.—An opening made in a fortification by bombardment or otherwise.

BREASTWORKS.—This term is used in "The Shelter-Trench Exercise," and signifies a low parapet reaching to the breast of the defenders.

BRIGADE.—An infantry brigade usually consists of three battalions with a due proportion of the usual departments. A cavalry brigade would be composed of three regiments and one battery Royal Horse Artillery. A brigade may also be composed of the three arms combined.

BRIDGE.—Military bridges are of various kinds and for several purposes. The chief are—Bridges of boats, pontoon bridges, bridges of casks, trestle bridges, raft bridges, spar bridges, and flying bridges.

BRIDGE HEAD.—A fortification covering the communications across a river, strong enough to

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resist attack, and large enough to shelter the defenders.

BRUNT.—The heat or utmost violence of an onset. The force of a blow.

BURSTING CHARGE.—Is the charge of powder with which the various sorts of shells are loaded, which is ignited either by a time-fuse, or, when striking the object or the ground, by a percussion fuse.

C.

CALIBRE.—The diameter of the bore of a gun.

CAMPAIGN.—The time that an army keeps the field, in action, in marches, and in camp, without going into winter quarters.

CANISTER OR CASE SHOT.—A cylindrical iron case filled with balls or bullets, in clay or sand. This is used at short ranges to repel a sudden rush on the guns. It has taken the place of grape-shot, which is now obsolete. It is only effective up to about 350 yards.

CANTONED.—Divided into distinct parts, or detached into distinct quarters.

CANTONMENTS.—In India this is a term used to denote any permanent military station.

CARBINE.—A short rifle used by both cavalry and artillery.

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CARDINAL POINTS.—The chief points of the compass—North, South, East, West.

CARRY.—To carry is to take possession of, to carry by assault.

CAUSEWAY.—A road or path raised above the natural level of the surrounding country by earth, timber, stones, faggots, &c., serving as a dry passage over marshes or lagoons.

CAVALRY.—One of the mounted branches of the army. Cavalry regiments are called either dragoons, hussars, or lancers; the two former carry swords and carbines, the latter have lances in addition. The cavalry soldier when mounted depends individually on sword or lance; firearms should not be used from the saddle, except to make a signal, or to give the alarm. Dismounted cavalry can use their carbines effectually to check an advance or to hold a post; each man carries 20 rounds of ammunition. A cavalry regiment consists of eight troops, or four squadrons of two troops each.

Pace.—Walk, four miles an hour; trot, eight; canter, 10.

Characteristics.—Expensive to equip and maintain, and takes longer to train than infantry.

CENTRALISATION.—The act of drawing to a central point.

CHARACTERISTIC.—That which distinguishes a person, or thing, from another.

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CHARGE.—Is the weight of powder used in each round, for both guns and rifles. *To Charge* is to advance to the attack of an opposing force with a rush: Infantry at the double, Cavalry at gallop. Artillery do not charge.

CIRCUMSPECTION.—Caution. Attention to all the circumstances of a case.

CITADEL.—A stronghold within a village or small town. When a village is placed in a state of defence the largest and most commanding building, in a central position, is fortified, and garrisoned by a separate body of troops, and is called the citadel. It is of the greatest importance, as, though the defenders may be driven from all other parts of the village, yet if the citadel be properly held it will greatly facilitate the work of recapture.

CLOSE COUNTRY.—Confined. Intersected by hedges, ditches, marshes, canals, rivers, &c.

COLLATE.—To compare, by examining the points in which two or more things of a similar kind agree or disagree.

COLUMN.—A succession of companies, or parts of companies, from front to rear, parallel to each other. According to the density of the column it is called open, quarter, or close. Sometimes the name "column" is given to a body of troops which is in effect a small army.

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COLUMN OF ROUTE.—Is a formation for moving on a road with a narrow front when on the line of march. In cavalry the front should not be broader than column of sections, i. e. four men abreast; infantry in fours; artillery, one gun followed by a waggon.

COMBINATION.—The intimate union or association of two or more persons, or bodies of troops.

COMMISSARIAT.—A special branch of the army upon which rests the responsibility of supplying transport, food, clothing, &c., to the different branches of the army.

COMMON SHELL.—Is a hollow cast-iron elongated projectile, filled with a large bursting charge of powder. It bursts into a few large pieces, and is sometimes used, at both short and long ranges, against troops in mass or in line, if enfilade or oblique fire is possible; but chiefly against buildings or other obstacles. It is also employed for shelling villages, &c.

COMPANY.—The war establishment of a company of infantry is as follows:—Officers, 3; Sergeants, 5; Corporals, 5; Drummers, 2; Privates, 113; Total, 128. A company is divided into two half-companies, and four sections. Senior subaltern is right guide, junior subaltern left guide. In line, companies are numbered from right to left; in column, from front to rear.

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COMPASS.—An instrument used in military surveying. A simple form of sun compass which might be used in the field is explained in p. 7, 'Elements of Modern Tactics,' by Lieut.-Col. Wilkinson Shaw.

COMPLIMENTS.—The military marks of respect shown by sentries, guards, or bodies of troops to officers, according to rank.

CONCENTRATION.—The act of collecting on a common centre.

CONFIGURATION.—The form and shape of a country, i. e. if flat, hilly, or mountainous.

CONNECTING FILES.—Are files thrown out by the various parts of advanced guards, or by picquets, or supports in "the Attack," to keep up communication with the sentries or bodies of troops on their front or flanks.

CONSCRIPTION.—A compulsory enrolment by lot of the inhabitants of a country for service in the army; resorted to in most of the Continental armies.

CONTROL.—A name by which the Commissariat Department of the army was formerly known.

CONVERGING.—Tending to one point. Approaching each other, as lines extended.

CONVOYS.—The modes of transport requiring escort used in connection with an army. They are

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classed under two heads: 1st. Those moving with provisions, ammunition, &c., to the army; 2nd. Those moving with sick, wounded, or prisoners away from an army. There are convoys by road, by rail, and by river.

CORDON.—A chain of double sentries or vedettes surrounding an army for the purpose of preventing isolated individuals passing through the line of outposts. A combination of the cordon and patrol system is now in use in our army.

CORPS D'ARMÉE.—An army corps. One of the subdivisions, and the first unit of a large army. It is composed of three divisions complete, and a cavalry brigade. Usual strength about 21 battalions of infantry, 6 regiments of cavalry, and 90 guns.

COUNTER-ATTACK.—An attack made to counteract the action of the enemy.

COUNTERSIGN.—A sort of watchword given daily by the commander of an outpost or garrison, in order that the various sentries and guards may distinguish friends from foes. The countersign must be immediately changed if any man knowing it should desert to the enemy.

COUNTER-STROKE.—A stroke or attack returned.

COUP D'ŒIL.—Immediate inspiration. The art of quickly seeing the weak points of a position, and the advantages to be derived therefrom.

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CRENELATE.—A wall is said to be crenelated when it has holes cut in it for musketry, commencing at the top of the wall and reaching to about the breast of the defenders. A loop-holed wall is the same, except that the holes are cut in the wall and do not commence at the top, the former may be likened to the letter U, and the latter to the letter O.

CROSS FIRE.—Means that the projectiles from guns in different positions cross one another at a particular point of ground. It produces by its distracting action a peculiar moral disorganisation.

CROUP.—The buttocks of a horse.

CURVED FIRE.—Indirect or curved fire is that from guns with reduced charges which fire shot or shell so as just to clear an interposing obstacle, and then descend upon the enemy who are all the time unseen by the gunners.

D.

DAM.—A wall of stones, a bank of earth, or any other obstruction built across a river to make it overflow its banks or change its course.

DEBOUCH.—To march out of a village, a defile, &c.

DEFENCE.—A place is said to be put in a state of defence, when a commander has arranged that his

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men are well protected from the fire of the enemy; when the defenders can use their own weapons with effect as soon as the enemy comes within range; when the position is protected by every available obstacle which can check the enemy, and prevent his reaching the defenders.

DEFILE.—Is any portion of ground that, owing to local impediments, can only be traversed by troops on a front narrow in proportion to their numbers. The term is therefore a relative one, and depends on the strength of the force engaged. There are four descriptions of defile named by Clery in his 'Minor Tactics,' p. 242.

DEMARCATION.—A limit or boundary ascertained and fixed.

DEMONSTRATION.—This is a military term used to distinguish a feint from a real attack. The secondary crossings made in the attack on rivers, are instances of this.

DEMORALISED.—Corrupted, or shaken in discipline.

DEPLOY.—From the French déployer, to display or unfold, i.e. to unfold, or form companies from column into line.

DEPTH.—Is the space taken up by a body of troops, from front to rear.

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DESIDERATA.—Things which are not possessed, but which are desirable.

DEVELOPMENT.—The unfolding, or unravelling of a plot or plan.

DEVIATION.—The course a bullet takes oblique to the line of direction.

DEW PONDS. — Excavations made, usually in chalk and lined with clay. They are in some countries filled and replenished by the dew alone. Horses should not be watered at these ponds as the clay coating might be injured and the ponds destroyed. The water should be retained for cooking and the drinking of the troops.

DIAGONAL MARCH.—A march by which troops move to a flank, at an angle of 45° with the front.

DIRECT FIRE.—Is that from guns with service charges at an angle of elevation not exceeding 15°.

DISCIPLINE.—Strict obedience to superiors. It may be defined as the perfection of order and regulation in an army, which without it would be a mere mob. It also means the most efficient combination of many and various parts of an army for a common end.

DISMOUNTED CAVALRY.—Cavalry should only be employed on dismounted service when the nature of the ground prevents them from acting otherwise, and when they cannot be attacked by the cavalry

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of the enemy. The led horses must not be under fire, but must be kept as near as possible to the dismounted men.

DISORGANISED.—Reduced to disorder.

DISPOSITION.—The manner in which an army, or the parts of an army, or any bodies of troops, are placed, or strategically arranged.

DISTANCE.—The space between men or corps, from front to rear.

DITCH. — An excavation made in front of a parapet, either as an obstacle, or simply for obtaining earth to make the parapet.

DIVISION OF AN ARMY.—Two brigades of infantry, together with one divisional infantry regiment; a proportion of artillery, cavalry, commissariat, &c., form a division which is a complete tactical and administrative unit of all three arms, and with the necessary supply train is able to march and fight independently.

DIVISION OF ARTILLERY.—Consists of two guns with their waggons following them.

DIVISION OF CAVALRY.—The several brigades of cavalry belonging to an army corps, when joined together, form a *Cavalry Division*, the duties of which are to precede the army by a day's march or more, and form a screen covering the front and flanks of the army.

DIVISIONAL CAVALRY.—A regiment of cavalry

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belonging to a division of the army. Its duties are to provide cavalry for the advanced guard of the division, escorts, orderlies, &c., and maintain connection with other divisions.

DOUBLE COLUMN.—Two single columns of different battalions abreast of each other.

DOUBLE COMPANY.—Two companies of the same battalion abreast of each other.

DOUBLE TIME.—The trot of infantry. Length of pace 33 inches, 165 paces, or 453 feet, per minute.

DRESS.—In military drill this is the word given to men to correct their alignment.

DRILL.—From an obsolete French word "drille," "a soldier." The instruction, and practice of military exercises.

DRIVERS.—The men in a battery of artillery are divided into gunners, drivers, and artificers. Drivers are enlisted shorter in stature than the other men, as they are only required to drive the horses, not to work the guns.

E.

EARTHWORKS.—Are fortifications which are made chiefly of earth and turf. These works are so easily repaired that they have been found to stand a bombardment better than masonry.

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ECHELON.—Is when the line of troops is broken into several parts, moving direct to the front or rear in succession. *Oblique Echelon* is when the divisions of a line wheel less than the quarter circle, so as to be oblique to the former front and parallel with each other. *Short Echelon* is formed by the two centre companies of a line advancing, and the remaining companies of half-battalions following in succession, at six paces interval.

EFFICIENCY.—Active competent power.

ELEMENTARY.—Initial, rudimental, containing or discussing first principles, rules, or rudiments.

ELEVATION.—Is the raising the axis of the gun, or rifle, sufficiently high to enable the shot to range the required distance. This is usually done, by artillery, by means of a tangent scale; and by riflemen, by means of the back-sight of their rifles.

EMBRASURE.—An opening cut in a parapet to enable artillery to fire through, and to command a certain extent of country.

ENCAMPMENT.—The place where any body of troops rests, in huts or tents.

ENFILADE FIRE.—Is one which rakes the enemy's line of troops. The gun must be posted in prolongation of the line to be raked. This is a most decisively effective fire, being also demoralising

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to the enemy on account of the impossibility of reply.

ENGAGEMENT.—A fight. A battle between two armies.

ENTANGLEMENTS.—Are usually made with strong stakes and wire for the discomfiture of cavalry, but they are sometimes formed of felled trees in the same way as abatis.

ENTERPRISING.—Resolute and active. Prompt to attempt sudden and unlooked for attacks.

ENVIRON.—To besiege, to enclose, to invest.

EPAULMENT.—A protecting parapet on the flank of a battery, usually made of gabions, &c.

EQUIPMENT.—All arms, clothing, accoutrements, &c., necessary for a soldier when on an expedition or voyage.

ERUDITION.—Learning. Knowledge gained from study, or from books and instruction.

ESCORT.—A guard of soldiers over prisoners, stores, or distinguished officers and Royalty.

EVACUATE.—To quit. To withdraw from a village, town, or position.

EVOLUTION.—A movement by which troops change their position for attack or defence.

EXAMINING GUARD.—Usually consists of a non-commissioned officer and four men, and its duties are to examine every one wishing to pass through

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the line of sentries, give or refuse permission to pass, or send in a report and await orders, in accordance with the instructions given. These guards are usually posted on a main road intersecting the outposts of an army.

EXERCISE.—Drill, and manœuvring of bodies of troops. Instruction in the use of the various weapons known in the British Army: as bayonet exercise, sword exercise, &c.

EXPEDITION.—The formation and march of a body of troops for any important or hazardous purpose, such as the surprise and capture of an important village or bridge.

EXPLOSION.—The bursting, or sudden expansion, of any elastic fluid with force, and a loud report. The discharge of a gun.

F.

FALL.—Any besieged place is said to fall when it surrenders. A rope attached to a gun, which passes over a double and triple block; the end of it passing round the windlass is called the fall. Commonly used by the Royal Artillery.

FALSE ATTACK.—A secondary attack, or any feint intended to divert the attention of the enemy from the real attack.

FASCINES.—Bundles of sticks, or brushwood,

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bound together in long thin faggots, the usual length is 18 feet, and 9 inches in diameter, but they are made shorter if required for special purposes.

FERRY.—A ferry is one of the means by which rivers are crossed, a flying bridge is a sort of ferry. A place where boats pass over water to convey passengers.

FIELD ARTILLERY. *See* ARTILLERY.

FIGHT.—An engagement between contending forces.

FIGHTING LINE.—Is the first extended line of a battalion moving to the attack, the second line being the supports, and the third the reserve.

FILE.—Two men, a front-rank man and his rear-rank man.

FINALITY.—The final or last condition.

FIRE ACTION.—The act of fighting with firearms, i. e. guns or rifles. *See* ACTION.

FLAG OF TRUCE.—A white flag usually carried by an officer who is deputed by superior authority to communicate with the enemy. *See* 'Queen's Regulations,' Sect. VIII., Para. 63, and Clery, p. 11.

FLANK.—The *Inner Flank*, that nearest the point of appui. *Directing or Pivot Flank*, that by which troops march. *Outer Flank*, that opposite the inner flank. *Reverse Flank*, that opposite the directing flank.

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FLANK ATTACK.—An attack upon the side or flank of an army, this was a favourite manœuvre of Frederick the Great's. Our attacks are now usually made on front and flanks if possible.

FLANK DEFENCE.—Is the means used in fortifying a position, to protect every part from unnecessary exposure to the direct fire of the enemy.

FLANK MARCH.—Is a march in which a force exposes its flank to an attack of the enemy. This is only considered dangerous when the enemy is at striking distance. It requires great speed and discipline on the part of the troops employed, and great vigilance and energy on that of the commander.

FLANKING FIRE.—Must be directed along the front of or nearly parallel to the line to be flanked. It would thus take in flank an enemy approaching to direct attack. This fire has the same advantages as enfilade fire.

FLANKING PARTIES.—Are thrown out by advanced and rear guards to turn the flanks of all obstacles, and so ascertain that no enemy is near to hinder the advance of the main body.

FLASH.—A sudden burst of flame or light. A sudden widening in a canal or river.

FLYING BRIDGE.—A sort of ferry; it usually consists of one or more boats or barges moored by

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a long cable to a point in the centre of a stream; when these boats are properly steered, in a strong current, they are swept by it from one bank to the other.

Flying Camp.—A camp only pitched for a short time, the site in this case would be selected for tactical reasons, and not for sanitary ones as it would be in a standing camp.

Flying Posts.—Small cavalry patrols of about four men, usually used by outposts about dusk, on roads leading to the enemy.

Folds of Ground.—Undulating. Ground covered with small hills.

Force.—A body of armed men.

Ford.—A defile of inconsiderable length whose flanks are open but inaccessible. Shallow parts of a river. The limits of depth fordable by infantry, 3 ft.; by cavalry, 4 ft.; by artillery, 2 ft. 4 in., with limber boxes, and 3 ft. 4 in. without.

Fortification.—The act of strengthening a position, or putting a town, village, &c., in a state of defence. Is divided into two heads, viz. Permanent and Field Fortification.

Fraise.—A fence of wooden posts placed close together, and firmly fixed in the ground, pointing slightly outwards. Used to assist the defence of permanent and field fortifications.

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FRONT.—The front with reference to an alignment is the direction of the supposed enemy. Used as a general term, the word signifies the direction in which soldiers face when occupying the same relative positions as when last told off.

FRONT, CHANGE OF.—Taking up a new alignment on a base at an angle to, and either touching or intersecting the former alignment.

FRONT FIRE.—A frontal fire is that which is directed perpendicularly, or nearly so, to the general line of troops fired at.

FRONTAGE.—Is the extent of ground occupied by the front rank of a body of troops, in whatever formation they may be.

FUNDAMENTAL.—A leading or primary principle, rule, or law, which serves as the groundwork of a system.

FUSE.—The fuses which are used to explode shells, are either percussion fuses, or time fuses. The bursting charge of a shell is ignited either at a previously calculated moment of its flight by a time fuse; or on striking the object aimed at, or the ground, by a percussion fuse. *See* LENGTH OF FUSE.

G.

GABION.—A large basket open at both ends, and cylindrical in shape; when filled with earth is used

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for rivetting the interior slopes of a battery. Size 3 feet high, and 2 feet in diameter. Gabions are sometimes made with wooden uprights, and interlaced with iron bands.

GALLOP.—Cavalry gallop at the rate of 12 miles an hour, or 352 yards in a minute. The pace of an orderly on service may be taken at the above rate for one mile, but beyond that distance at 10 miles an hour, or 293 yards a minute.

GARRISON. — Troops stationed in any fortified place, for its security, or otherwise.

GLACIS.—The slope in front of a fortification which extends to the natural surface of the ground in the neighbourhood.

GROUND.—The position or place where a battle is fought. *Taking Ground* is the moving a body of troops in any required direction. *Gaining Ground* is advancing. *Losing Ground* is retiring.

GROUP.—This is a formation to resist cavalry used in skirmishing, and in "The Attack." When ordered to form groups, the right and left files of every four will close to each other, turn outwards, and prepare for cavalry if necessary.

GUARD.—A body of men under an officer or non-commissioned officer, told off to protect a particular person or spot. The strength of a guard is regulated by the number of sentries it is required to

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furnish; it is told off in threes, that being the number of men required to furnish reliefs for each single sentry. A guard usually remains on duty for 24 hours.

GUIDE.—Right and left. The subaltern officers of a company are usually the guides if all the officers are present, but if not, the senior non-commissioned officers will act as guides. Senior right guide, next senior left. *Guides*, on service, are trustworthy natives selected to guide the troops on their march.

GUN.—This term is now applied solely to the pieces of ordnance used by the Royal Artillery. *See* ARTILLERY.

GUNNERS.—Those men of the Royal Artillery who are employed to work the guns. The rank of a gunner is the same as a private in the line.

GYN.—A machine made of wood or iron, used to mount or dismount guns from their carriages.

H.

HABITUATED. — Accustomed. Made familiar by use.

HALF-BATTERY.—A battery is divided into two half-batteries, called the right and left half, each consisting of three guns with their waggons.

HALT.—The word of command given to troops

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while marching, to bring them to a full stop. On the line of march regular halts should be observed, for the purpose of resting the men and horses; these should be made at stated hours. The custom on this head varies in different armies, General Craufurd's orders to the light division directed a halt, half-an-hour after starting, and once every hour afterwards, the halt to last at least five minutes. When the halt is sounded troops should be allowed to rest in the order of march, unless they are in a village or defile, when the village or defile must be cleared before the halt is made.

HAMLET.—A few houses collected together, but without a church, is termed a hamlet. If a church is with the houses it is a village. If the houses and churches are numerous it is a town. If there is a cathedral it is a city.

HAVERSACK.—A canvas or linen bag issued to every soldier; it is used to carry provisions, &c., and worn with a sling or strap over the right shoulder.

HIGH ANGLE FIRE.—Is that directed from guns at a greater elevation than 15°, with any charges. This term now includes vertical fire.

HORIZONTAL.—Parallel to the horizon. On a level.

HORSE ARTILLERY.—The mounted branch of the Royal Artillery, which is able to act with, and as

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quickly as, cavalry. A battery of horse artillery has 7 officers, 174 men, 77 riding horses, 106 draught horses, 6 guns, 6 waggons, 1 forge, 3 spare carriages.

HOWITZER.—A light piece of ordnance used to throw shells.

HUSSARS.—Light cavalry. *See* CAVALRY.

HUTS.—When there is no fear of a sudden attack huts may be used as a temporary or permanent camp for an army. Huts are commonly in use as winter quarters for an army in the field, they may be made of bamboo, leaves, straw, brushwood, wood planks, or sheet iron, the walls are also frequently constructed of stones and turf.

I.

IMBRUE.—To wet or moisten. To drench in blood.

IMPACT.—The blow with which a shot from a gun strikes the object aimed at. The moment of impact is that when the two bodies meet.

IMPREGNABLE.—Invincible. That cannot be reduced or conquered by force.

INDEMNITY.—Security against punishment. A writing or pledge by which a person is secured from future loss or injury.

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INDENT.—To notch; to jag. An indent is a sort of requisition or application for stores; chiefly used in India.

INDIRECT FIRE. *See* CURVED FIRE.

INFANTRY.—This is the only arm that acts independently under all circumstances, it is easy to raise, train and equip, and comparatively cheap. The action of infantry is—1st. Fire-action; 2nd. Shock-action; 3rd. A combination of the two. The tactical unit of infantry is the battalion, war establishment as follows:—Officers, 31; Non-commissioned officers and men, 1066. A battalion is usually divided into eight companies.

INFORMATION to be acquired by an army in the field is inseparably connected with Security, both these duties being chiefly entrusted to the outposts. Information is obtained in two ways—1st. By the reports of spies, deserters, prisoners, &c.; 2nd. By reconnaissance. All information obtained must be thoroughly sifted before it is reported.

INITIATIVE.—To take the initiative is to be the first to begin the fight, and to compel the enemy to follow suit.

INTENDANCE.—The pay and commissariat departments in Continential armies.

INTERN, To.—To shelter and protect from harm foreign troops, who have taken shelter, or sought

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protection from a neutral state. Bourbaki's army when pressed by the Germans sought protection, and was interned in Swiss territory.

INTERSECTED COUNTRY.—Is that which is divided and cut up by hedges, ditches, marshes, rivers, &c.

INTERVAL.—The lateral space between men or corps in frontage. Between infantry and cavalry the intervals are 25 yards; between batteries of artillery or artillery and either of the other arms, 28½ yards. The interval between squadrons in line, 12 yards. Full interval between sub-divisions of a battery in line, 19 yards. Half intervals, 9½ yards.

INTRENCH.—To increase the power of defence of a position, by the use of field works, defensible posts, or even shelter-trenches.

INVASION.—The act of marching an army into an enemy's country.

INVEST.—To surround and lay siege to a fortress, village, &c.

J.

JUNK.—Unravelled rope, commonly used as wadding for ordnance. *Salt Junk*, the salt beef issued to soldiers on service.

K.

KEEP.—A strong tower built in the centre of a castle or fort, to be held by the besieged even after

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the fort itself is taken. The citadel in a fortified village may be called the keep.

KEY OF POSITION.—A military position which may be naturally weak, but by being strengthened can be made a formidable point of defence.

KNOLL.—The top or crown of a hill, but more generally a small round hill or mount.

KRIEGSSPIEL.—A German war game, invented for the purpose of teaching strategy and tactics.

L.

LADDERS.—There are several sorts of escalading ladders, those commonly used are made in lengths of 12 feet, and fit one into another, so as to form continuous steps of any required length. Ladders are also made of rope, wire, bamboo, &c.

LAGOON.—A fen, swamp, or shallow lake.

LANCE CORPORAL.—The lowest rank of non-commissioned officer in the infantry. *Lance Sergeant* is a corporal, with the acting rank of sergeant.

LANCERS.—Regiments of cavalry armed with lances, which are a sort of spear about nine feet long. Lancers are most effective in pursuit.

LATERAL COMMUNICATIONS.—Are those which are maintained by different divisions of an army moving to the same front by different roads, this is

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necessary to ensure rapid concentration when required.

LENGTH OF FUSE.—There are three lengths of time fuse now in use, calculated to burn five, nine, and twenty seconds. The composition burns at the rate of one inch in five seconds. *See* FUSE.

LIGHT CAVALRY.—Hussars. *See* CAVALRY.

LIMBER.—A two-wheeled carriage having boxes for ammunition, to which a gun is attached when limbered up.

LINE.—A battalion is said to be in line when its companies are deployed on the same alignment to their full extent, i. e. in two ranks. Columns are said to be in line when their fronts are on the same alignment. *Line of battle* is the formation of the three arms in order of battle.

LINES OF DEFENCE.—Are the natural and artificial defences which are held against an attacking force. The *Line of Resistance* is that where it is decided to make the first important stand.

LINES OF OPERATION.—The lines by which an army advances to form line of battle.

LINKED.—Regiments which have been joined together under the new localising scheme are said to be linked battalions. Led horses are linked when fastened together by the reins so as to facilitate their being held by one man.

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LOCALISE.—To confine to a limited space. To associate with a district, town, or country.

LOOPHOLE.—A slit, or long hole cut in a wall to enable riflemen effectively to use their rifles. *See* CRENELATE.

LUNETTE.—A work much used in field fortification.

M.

MAGNETIC.—Attractive. Possessing the properties of the magnet. The magnet derives its name from a city in Asia Minor (Magnesia) where it was first discovered.

MAIN BODY.—This, when speaking of an army, means the chief part, that portion of the force which is commanded by the senior general.

MANŒUVRES.—The application to the field of the principles and movements learnt at drill. The quick orderly change of highly drilled and flexible masses from one kind of formation to another, or their transference from one point to another.

MANTLETS.—Rifle-proof screens made of iron, and sometimes of thick ropes firmly bound together; they are generally provided at sieges for all embrasures, to protect the gunners.

MAP.—There are three kinds of map, viz. military, topographical and geographical. The first

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is a plan or drawing; the second a map similar to the Ordnance Survey; and the third a general map of large extent.

MARCH.—"Quick march," the usual word of command given to move soldiers from one place to another. For formations on line of march, *see* COLUMN OF ROUTE. When the three arms march together two conflicting questions have to be considered, viz. the Tactical and the Administrative. In war time, when the enemy is near, artillery must be in front of the column (or near to it); infantry in the centre, and cavalry in rear; but in time of peace the infantry will lead, followed by cavalry and artillery. If the three arms can move by different roads, then infantry should have the shortest, cavalry the softest, and artillery the hardest. Rate of marching, 2½ to 3 miles an hour for infantry, 4 miles for artillery, and 5 miles for cavalry; this rate will alter with the length of the column, the state of the roads, and the weather, &c. A days' march is usually from 10 to 15 miles; 20 miles and over is considered a forced march.

MARGIN.—The border, edge, brink or verge.

MARKSMAN.—A good shot. To become a marksman a soldier must have obtained at least, in the cavalry 175, in the infantry 200 points in the individual firing of the "range practice" of the annual course, and an aggregate of at least 42 points

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when firing 20 rounds in the "b" and "c" practices of the field practice, i.e. in the ten rounds fired at each of the "head and shoulders" and "figure" targets.

MARSH.—Low boggy land, usually partly covered with water. A swamp.

MASKED.—Hidden. A battery is said to be masked when it is concealed from the enemy.

MASS.—A mass of quarter columns is when several battalions of infantry in quarter column are formed in rear of one another, the distance between battalions being usually 12 paces. *Massing numbers* means the collecting together of large numbers, upon this power the development of physical superiority depends.

MASSING GUNS.—The joining together of several batteries in the field so as to concentrate their fire upon the enemy, this is considered the most effectual mode of silencing the opposing artillery.

MATERIALS.—The stores, &c., used by an army for all purposes.

MEAN.—Is the medium between two extremes.

MÈTRE.—A French measure of length equal to 39·37 English inches.

MOAT.—A ditch, or deep trench (wet or dry) round the rampart of a castle or other fortified place.

MOBILISATION.—The act of drawing together

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the various branches of the army and placing them on a war footing.

MOBILITY.—The power of quickly massing an army. The mobility of an army depends on the marching power of the force, and the organisation of its transport by its commander, as without these essentials an army cannot be massed at a given point in a given time.

MORAL.—Is that science which teaches men their duty and the reason of it. Hence the morale of an army is the feeling with which all ranks are inspired to do their duty.

MORAL SUPERIORITY.—Is superiority of intellect, and in a military sense it is derivable from stricter discipline, a better cause, previous successes, or similar influences. Its elements should be established in time of peace, success will confirm them in time of war.

MUNITIONS OF WAR.—Ammunition and military stores of every sort and description.

N.

NEUTRALITY.—The state of taking no part in disputes or contests between others.

NIGHT ATTACKS.—Are, on account of the great difficulty in mobilising the troops, of rare occurrence; the difficulties which by day on unknown

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ground are great, become insurmountable when encountered by night. Night marches are, however, sometimes undertaken, and then the attack is usually made at daybreak, or just before it. The attack at Tel-el-Kebir was an instance of this.

NORMAL.—According to rule, or principle.

NUMNAH, or *Numdah*.—A sort of felt saddle-cloth used in cavalry regiments to protect the horses' backs.

O.

OBLIQUE FIRE is that which is directed obliquely or slantwise to the line of troops fired at; it is more effective than frontal fire.

OBSOLETE.—Out of fashion. Out of date. Disused.

OCCUPATION, ARMY OF.—An army that remains in possession of a country it has conquered, until peace is signed or indemnity paid.

OFFENSIVE.—To assume the offensive in battle is to advance to the attack of the enemy instead of waiting to be attacked, which would be acting on the *defensive*.

OPERATIONS.—Military operations are the movements of an army in the field, which may be either tactical or strategical, according as the movements are made in the presence of, or before reaching the enemy.

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OPERATIONS, BASE OF. *See* BASE.

ORDER.—In a military sense an order is a command which admits of no dispute or hesitation. All orders on outpost duty should if possible be given in writing.

ORDER OF BATTLE. *See* LINE.

ORDERLIES are messengers, either horse or foot. It is always advisable to have a few cavalry attached to a picquet as orderlies.

ORDNANCE.—All guns and projectiles used in the British service.

ORGANISATION.—To organise an army is to establish subdivisions and to give chiefs to each, in order that they may be instructed and moved in accordance with the will of one man, and thus forming through all grades a chain of responsibility from the general to the last man.

OUTFLANK.—To turn with troops the flank, or flanks, of the enemy.

OUTLYING PICQUETS.—Are those on outpost duty; but picquets that are told off to remain in camp or quarters are called inlying picquets.

OUTPOSTS.—Are detachments thrown out by a force when halted, for its immediate protection from surprise. Its duties are observation and resistance, by which security and rest may be ensured to the army.

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OUTSET.—The beginning. The commencement of a fight or undertaking.

OUTWORKS.—Are fortifications constructed beyond the body of the place, but within the glacis.

OVALS.—Are formations assumed by the supports of the attacking force when severely pressed upon by the enemy's cavalry, but they are rarely required, a line two or four deep is usually considered sufficient for the purpose.

P.

PACE.—The usual length of pace for infantry is, in double time, 33 inches; quick time, 30 inches; stepping out, 33 inches; stepping short, 21 inches; length of side-step, 12 inches. When a soldier takes a side-step to clear, or cover another, as in forming fours, the pace will be 24 inches. A horse will walk at about 328 feet per minute; trot 656 feet, and gallop about 1056 feet per minute.

PARADE, To.—To draw up in order a body of troops for drill or inspection.

PARALLEL.—A line which throughout its whole extent is equidistant from another line. Parallel lines can never meet.

PARAPET.—A mass of earth which is thrown up as a protection against the progress and fire of the enemy, the height may be from four to eight feet,

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and the thickness varies according to the protection required.

PARAPHRASE.—To unfold an author's meaning with more clearness than his own words express.

PARK.—A park of artillery includes the whole of the guns, ammunition, waggons, stores, &c., required for a siege, as well as the small-arm ammunition. The word is also applied to the ground on which the guns stand or are parked. A Field or Engineer Park includes all the tools, materials, and stores required by the Royal Engineers. Convoys are parked in three ways: 1st. If for a simple halt, the waggons are ranged in lines 25 yards apart, axle to axle, poles facing in one direction, horses picketed in front of their waggons; 2nd. When parked to resist an attack, the waggons should be drawn up either in a square or oval in one or two ranks, carriages axle to axle, or if more space is required, end to end, horses are picketed in the interior opposite their waggons; 3rd. When the convoy is of gunpowder, then the carriages should be massed closely together, and the horses and escort should be withdrawn to some distance, so as not to draw the fire of the enemy on the convoy.

PARLEY.—To treat or confer with an enemy verbally.

PAROLE.—A word or countersign given daily

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by the officer commanding an army, in order that sentries may distinguish friends from foes. An officer if taken prisoner may be put on *parole* by the commander of the enemy's forces, he is then allowed at large but must give his word not to attempt to escape.

PARTY.—A party may consist of any number of men detached from a large force, for any purpose whatever.

PASS, MOUNTAIN.—A road, or path leading over a mountain.

PATROL.—There are three sorts of patrols used in our service:—

1. *Visiting Patrols.*—A non-commissioned officer and two or three men who are sent out between reliefs to visit sentries and keep up communication with neighbouring picquets.

2. *Reconnoitring Patrols* are sent forward half a mile to one mile to examine ground and give notice of approach of the enemy, usually composed of a non-commissioned officer and four men.

3. *Strong Patrols* are for the same purpose as reconnoitring patrols, may be of any strength, if over 12 men are furnished by supports or reserve.

PERCUSSION.—The impression one body makes on another by falling on it, or striking it. *See* FUSE.

PERPENDICULAR.—A line falling at right angles on the plane of the horizon.

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PERSONNEL.—The effective or useful part of an army.

PHYSICAL SUPERIORITY.—Can only be got by numbers, training, and proper weapons. Physical power is force of arms. Moral power, force of intellect.

PICKET, To.—To fasten horses by the head and heels, with ropes or chains, to short poles of wood called "pickets."

PICQUETS.—Are the most important part of the outposts, from which all the sentries surrounding a halted army come. The strength of picquets varies, and is governed by that of the outposts and the number of sentries and patrols absolutely necessary. *See* OUTLYING PICQUETS.

PILE.—To fix three rifles so that they stand alone. The arms of guards and picquets, when not in use, are usually piled, so as to be available at a moment's notice.

PIONEERS.—A small body of regimental artificers who march at the head of their corps with tools, &c., ready to remove any obstacle found on line of march.

PITS.—There are several sorts of pits, varying in size according to their several uses, but the most common are gun-pits, horse-pits, rifle-pits, shelter-pits, &c.

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PIVOT FLANK.—*See* FLANK. The flank man on whom a wheel is made is the pivot man.

PLAN.—*See* MAP. The word plan in engineering is applied to a representation of the surface that would be exposed if the object were cut horizontally at any level.

PLATEAU.—A broad flat open space of ground.

PLUNGING FIRE.—Is when a gun is fired from a height so that the projectile buries itself without ricochetting.

POINT.—The leading party in an advanced guard is called "the point." *See* APPUI. Tactical points on a field of battle are those which may be occupied with advantage.

POLICE.—Soldiers are employed as regimental and garrison police. A rear guard to an army advancing, has as a rule simply to act as police, protect the baggage, and collect stragglers.

PONTOON.—A pontoon is a sort of float usually made of metal, they are used to support a bridge over a river, and are generally either cylindrical or boat-shaped. A pontoon troop is a mounted company of Royal Engineers equipped with pontoons, carriages, and all materials for bridging a river.

POSITION, CHANGE OF.—As a general term, is moving off the ground occupied by troops and taking up a fresh alignment which neither touches

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nor intersects the former alignment, but may be either parallel or at an angle to it, and towards any front. For drill purposes, a change of position generally implies a change of front off the old alignment, on a base given by detached points.

POST.—A soldier's position while on sentry. *See* ADVANCED POSTS.

PRACTICAL.—Capable of practice or active use; opposed to speculative.

PREDOMINANT.—Superior in strength, influence, or authority.

PRISONERS OF WAR.—Soldiers captured by the enemy, or those who have surrendered; they may be confined in prison, or put on parole. *See* PAROLE.

PROJECTILE.—Is the term now applied to the various sorts of shot and shell used in our army, which are of two shapes, round or spherical and elongated.

Q.

QUARTER.—*To give quarter* is to spare a man's life. *To quarter*, to house or settle troops in a station. *Quarter guard* is usually the first guard mounted in camp or quarters, for their protection. *Head Quarters* the residence of the commander of the army.

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R.

RAFTS.—Are made of timber, sometimes with the addition of empty casks; they are used for bridging streams where the velocity is not great.

RAISON D'ETRE.—The reason why. The primary cause.

RAKING FIRE. *See* ENFILADE FIRE.

RALLY, To.—To collect and reduce to order troops dispersed or thrown into confusion. The *rallying point* of a picquet is usually in rear of the fire where the sentries are directed to collect if driven in by the enemy.

RANGE.—The range of modern artillery is almost unlimited, but the following are the usual limits:

Position guns,	from	1500 to 4000	yards.
16 pounders,	„	1000 to 2500	„
9 pounders,	„	800 to 2000	„

RANK.—A line of men side by side. *Double Rank*, two lines of men, one behind the other. *Rank and File*, includes corporals, lance corporals, and privates.

RATIONS.—The bread and meat issued to soldiers in camp or quarters. A horse's daily forage. Or any daily issue, such as grog, firewood, coal, oil, &c.

REAR.—Is the position which is the reverse to

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the front. *Rear Rank*, the rank behind the front rank. *Rear Guard*, that portion of troops which is told off to protect the rear of an army; if to an army advancing, the duty will be that of police, but if to a beaten army retiring, then the duty is most severe and harassing. The great art of rear guards, under these circumstances, is that of being able to compel the enemy frequently to deploy for attack, and then to continue the retirement without fighting; but a rear guard should be continually threatening to fight.

RECONNOITRING.—Is taking observation of everything. It is upon the ample and accurate information to be obtained by reconnoitring parties that every commander forms his plan of action. Cavalry is chiefly used for this duty. There are three sorts of reconnoitring parties—1. In force; 2. Special; 3. Ordinary. The strength of each of these parties will vary according to circumstances.

RE-ENTERING ANGLE.—The re-entering angle in a wood is that which points inwards, or towards the wood itself.

REGIMENT.—A regiment of infantry is now composed of several battalions, generally two of regular troops and three or four of auxiliary. A regiment of cavalry consists of four squadrons or eight troops. The artillery is called the Royal Regiment of Artillery, and is divided into several

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brigades. The Royal Engineers are spoken of as a corps, which is divided into companies and troops.

REINFORCE.—To strengthen with the supports.

RELIEF.—The new sentries who are required to relieve the old ones on the expiration of their time on sentry.

RENDEZVOUS.—A chosen place of meeting.

REQUISITION. — A common system of obtaining anything required by an army in the field, by payment or otherwise. A document usually required by officers in charge of stores (previous to issue) as a voucher.

RESERVE.—The reserve is intended as a general support to the lines of picquets and supports, it should consist of from one-third to one-half of the whole outpost. The reserve should be out of sight of the enemy, it may be advanced to reinforce supports, or take up a strong position on its own ground, on which the picquets and supports can retire.

RETIRE, To.—To fall back from a position. To retreat.

RICOCHET.—Ricochet fire enfilades or searches into a line of troops by a series of grazes and bounds of the shot, but the projectiles of rifled

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guns do not act truly on rebound. When distance is unknown riflemen usually fire at a low range, so as to judge the exact distance by marking the ricochet of their bullet.

River.—A stream with a velocity of 1½ feet per second, or 1 mile per hour, is "sluggish"; of 2 to 3 feet per second, or 2 miles per hour, is "swift"; of 3 to 6 feet per second, or 3 miles per hour, is "rapid"; of 9 feet per second, or 6 miles per hour, a "torrent."

Road.—When reporting upon a road, state the principal places connected by it; the exact width, state of repair, the gradients, drainage, level as regards the country, how enclosed, nature of surrounding country, if there are parallel or cross roads, &c.

Role.—The duty performed. The part acted.

Round Shot.—Circular projectiles fired from smooth-bore guns. *A Round* of ammunition is one charge, either for guns or rifles.

Rounds.—The visits paid by officers on duty to picquets, guards, sentries, &c. Captains and subalterns go Visiting Rounds; field officers, Grand Rounds.

Route.—An order to march. Also the road by which troops move. *See* Column of Route.

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ROUTINE. — A method attained by habit. An every-day duty.

RUGGED.—Rough, uneven, or rocky country.

RUSE. — Artifice. Trick. Stratagem. Fraud. Deceit.

S.

SALIENT ANGLE.—An angle that projects, or is advanced.

SALVO.—The discharge together of a number of guns. This would be the artillery equivalent to an infantry volley.

SCOUTS OF INFANTRY, or CAVALRY.—Are men thrown out in advance, to search for the enemy and report his position. The term is also applied to an ordinary reconnoitrer detached from a patrol or guard.

SECTION. — The fourth part of a company of infantry. Cavalry in sections is double the front in line. In half-sections it is four times the front in line.

SECURITY.—To an army halted, is assured by outposts. To an army on the march, by advanced and rear guards.

SENTRIES.—May be double or single, and should be relieved every two hours, or oftener if necessary. Mounted cavalry sentries are called vedettes.

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SERREFILES. *See* SUPERNUMERARY RANK.

SHELL.—Shrapnel shell is packed with bullets which are liberated in their flight, at the proper moment, by a small bursting charge of powder breaking up the outer case of the shell. Used against all formations of troops up to 3500 yards. The head of shrapnel shell is painted red to distinguish it from common shell. *See* COMMON.

SHELTER TRENCH.—A small trench thrown up in presence of an enemy to afford temporary shelter from shot and shell. For definitions of terms in the Shelter-Trench Exercise, *see* 'Field Exercise,' p. xxx.

SHOCK ACTION. *See* ACTION.

SIGNALS.—Those authorised are,—

To advance.—A wave of hand or sword.

To ask for reinforcements.—Head-dress held or waved above head.

No enemy in sight.—Rifle or sword with cap on it held perpendicularly.

Enemy in sight.—Rifle or sword held up horizontally.

Enemy in very small bodies.—Rifle or sword held up steadily.

Enemy in strong bodies.—Rifle or sword lowered and raised.

It is advised to add to the above:—The hand held up high above either shoulder to signify

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Halt. The whistle is also sanctioned as a signal, but it is not at present in much favour.

SIMULTANEOUS.—At the same time. All at once.

SKIRMISHING.—The object of this is either to cover a body of troops, not formed for attack, with an extended line; or to feel for an enemy whose exact position is unknown, when advancing through an enclosed country.

SOLID SHOT.—Projectiles made of solid iron; now obsolete in our army, but used in the navy against ironclads.

SORTIE.—To issue out from a besieged place to the attack. To make an unexpected dash for the purpose of annoying the enemy, or retarding him in his work.

SPACE.—The amount of ground that would be required for the strategetical movement of troops.

SPAR BRIDGE.—A light sort of wooden platform used to connect the broken arches of a bridge that has been partly destroyed.

SPITZ. — A German word used to signify the *point*, i. e. the most advanced, or rearmost group, in an advanced or rear guard.

SPY.—An informer; a necessary evil in warfare.

SQUAD. — A few soldiers detailed for drill or fatigue.

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SQUADRON.—Two troops of cavalry. *See* CAVALRY.

STAFF OFFICER.—Is an officer who acts as the eye and ear of the general, or other officer to whom he is attached, who conveys his orders, collects information for him, and represents him when he is not present. If the general of an army be compared to the head, the staff may be justly compared to the nerves which convey the volition from the head to the different members. There are many sorts of staff officers, viz. Regimental, Brigade, Divisional, General, Departmental, &c.

STATUS QUO.—This means the position in which two opposing armies find themselves, when neither has gained an advantage. The soldier will best understand this by the expression "As you were."

STRAGGLERS.—Men who have fallen out from the main body, through fatigue or any other cause. It is the duty of the rear guard to collect these men and bring them in.

STRATAGEM.—A trick. A plan or scheme for deceiving the enemy.

STRATEGY.—Is the art of conducting the greater operations of war, by movements that take place out of sight of, or at a distance from an enemy. *Strategy* decides where to act. Major Tactics decide the manner of execution.

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STREAM, TRIBUTARY.—These are small streams which flow into a river, they are most useful when preparing to build a bridge, as boats or other floats may be concealed in them, together with other material, and need only be brought from thence to the main river at the last moment.

SUBDIVISION.—Is half a company of infantry. The front of a subdivision in a field battery is one gun (3 yards). The front of a subdivision in a horse artillery battery is 7 yards. Column of subdivisions is a gun with a waggon on its right.

SUBSTITUTION.—Is placing one man in another's place. Conscription with substitution was introduced into the French army in the time of Napoleon in lieu of universal service.

SUPERIORITY. *See* MORAL and PHYSICAL.

SUPERNUMERARY RANK.—Is the third rank of infantry, and the serrefiles in cavalry (composed of officers and non-commissioned officers).

SUPPLIES.—All rations, stores, clothing, ammunition, &c., required for an army.

SUPPORTS.—Are the aids to the fighting line, or reconnoitring parties, who supply reinforcements and cover retreat.

SYNOPSIS.—A general view; or a collection of things so arranged as to exhibit the whole in a condensed form or view.

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T.

TACTICS.—The drill and manœuvres of the three arms combined, in the presence of the enemy. Tactics may be divided into two divisions—1. Higher tactics, which commence as soon as the two armies have been brought face to face by the operations of strategy; 2. Minor tactics, which come into use not only on the field of battle but also off it, in fact their application never ceases during a campaign.

TACTICAL EFFICIENCY.—Consists in being able to march, drill, and shoot well.

TACTICAL POINTS. *See* POINTS.

TENT.—Those generally used are circular tents, 10 feet high, 12½ feet in diameter, calculated to hold 15 men. Larger tents are used in India.

TENTATIVE.—Trying. Attempting.

THEATRE OF WAR.—The whole tract of country in which it is possible for the opposing forces to meet.

THEORETICAL.—Speculative. Not practical.

TIME FUSE. *See* FUSE.

TOUCH.—When the enemy is met with, the *Touch* of him should never be lost, i. e. his movements and intentions should be unceasingly watched and reported. When soldiers are marching in line they must be instructed in "*The Touch*," as it is the

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principal guide when marching. Each man should be able to feel his right- or left-hand man at the elbow.

TRAIN.—This word is used to imply the ordnance carriages, ammunition, and in fact all apparatus and implements of war.

TRAINING.—Is the drill upon which physical superiority partly depends.

TRAJECTORY.—This is a curved line showing the actual course of a projectile through the air, from the muzzle of the gun or rifle to the object.

TRANSPORT, To.—Is to move troops by road, rail, or sea from one station to another.

TRENCHES.—Are the approaches made by an army, when laying siege to any place. *See* SHELTER. Excavations in rear of a parapet, made to give greater shelter to the defenders.

TRESTLE BRIDGE.—This is a bridge supported on stands made of wood or iron, having two, four, five or six legs. Generally employed to cross shallow streams with firm bottoms.

TROOP.—A troop of cavalry corresponds to a company of infantry.

TROOPER.—A cavalry soldier.

TROOPS.—This word is applied to bodies of men under military command, of any strength.

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TROT.—One of the paces of cavalry, eight miles an hour, which should not be kept up for more than two or three miles at a time.

TRUCE.—A temporary cessation of hostilities. *See* FLAG OF TRUCE.

TUMBRILS.—Covered carts used in an army for various purposes.

U.

UNDISCIPLINED.—Not perfect in military instruction. Recruits, &c.

UNIT.—A tactical unit is any body of troops in command of one man, and *Fighting Units* are the component parts of the tactical units. Thus a battalion of infantry may be a tactical unit, and the companies of that battalion the fighting units.

UNLIMBER.—To detach the gun from its limber for the purpose of firing it. *See* LIMBER.

V.

VAN.—The front of an army.

VAN GUARD.—This term is usually applied to the whole of the advanced guard of an army, but sometimes to the leading parties of the advanced guard, which are generally composed of cavalry, with infantry and engineers in support.

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VEDETTES.—Are mounted cavalry sentries; they should always be doubled if required at night, and at other times when practicable.

VELOCITY.—The swiftness of a river. *See* RIVER.

VERTICAL FIRE.—An obsolete term; now called high angle fire.

VISUAL SIGNALLING.—Is now carried on in the army by means of hand-flags and the heliograph, formerly semaphores were used, but they are now obsolete.

VOLLEY.—The simultaneous discharge of a number of rifles. *See* SALVO.

W.

WAGGONS.—Are of various sorts, all named after the uses to which they are specially dedicated in the army. It is only necessary to speak here of the artillery ammunition waggon, which is a carriage with limber attached, and carries the chief part of the ammunition; one accompanies each gun of a field battery.

WALK.—The pace of cavalry corresponding to the "Quick March" of infantry. *See* CAVALRY.

WAR.—Properly so called, is an armed contest between independent nations, and can only be made by the sovereign power of a state. In this country

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a formal announcement of war is made by a proclamation issued by Her Majesty and posted in the City of London. For the customs of war, *see* Chap. 14, 'Manual of Military Law.'

WATER.—When water is scarce it may be necessary to put a soldier on an allowance, but Lord Wolseley says that for drinking and cooking this should not be less than six to eight pints a man per day; but in ordinary cases for all purposes the allowance should be five gallons daily. Horses require six to twelve gallons a day. Oxen six to seven gallons daily.

WHISTLE.—The whistle, either as a means of signalling or drawing attention to signals, is valuable either by day or night, but although its employment is sanctioned in the army its uses have not yet been fully developed.

WINGS.—The divisions, or brigades, on the right and left of the centre of an army.

WOODS.—Are difficult and dangerous to attack, but they are of great use to the defenders as they conceal their strength from the enemy; and generally they are of use to an army as points d'appui. *See* APPUI.

Y.

YOKE.—A means by which oxen are connected together for drawing; much used in India.

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Z.

ZIGZAGS.—Siege trenches are usually constructed in a zigzag direction, so as to prevent their being enfiladed by the enemy.

ZONE OF DEFENCE.—Is a circle drawn round a fortification within effective range of the guns; if there are buildings or woods within this zone, they should be removed by the defenders before the attack is made.

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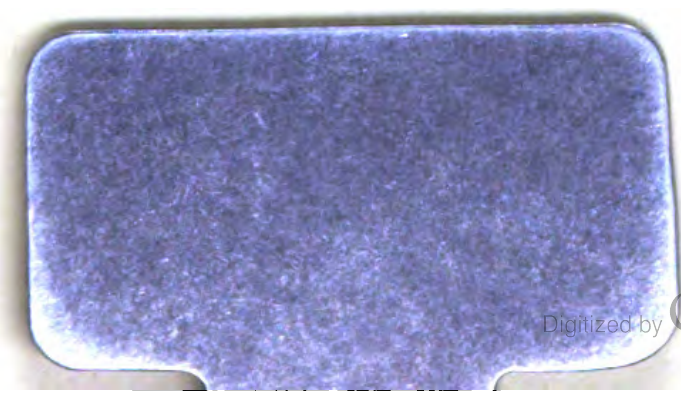
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